



Front Country Trails Multi-Jurisdictional Task Force

P.O. Box 1990, Santa Barbara, CA 93102-1990
Fax Number 805.564.5480

Phone Number 805.564-5431
www.santabarbaraCA.gov

Regular Meeting
Wednesday, March 3, 2010
5:30 PM
Santa Barbara County Administration Building
Planning Commission Hearing Room – 123 E. Anapamu Street, Santa Barbara

MINUTES

CALL TO ORDER: Chair Perkins called the regular meeting of the Front Country Trails Multi-Jurisdictional Task Force to order at 5:30 PM at the Santa Barbara County Administration Building, Planning Commission Hearing Room, 123 E. Anapamu Street, Santa Barbara.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE: By Chair Perkins.

ROLL CALL: Task Force Members Present:

Suzanne Perkins	County Park Commissioner, 1 st District
Judith Dale	County Park Commissioner, 2 nd District
Beebe Longstreet	City Park & Recreation Commissioner
W. Scott Burns	City Park & Recreation Commissioner
Bruce Emmens	Public Use & Facilities Staff Officer, Los Padres National Forest
Jeff Bensen	Assistant Forest Recreation Officer, Los Padres National Forest

City Staff Present:

Jill Zachary	Assistant Parks and Recreation Director
Kathy Frye	Associate Park/Natural Areas Planner
Rebecca Mordini	Front Country Trails Coordinator

County of Santa Barbara Staff Present:

Erik Axelson	County Parks Deputy Director
Claude Garciacelay	ASLA, Park Planner
Lyn Semenza	Administrative Office Professional

Los Padres National Forest Staff Present:

Kerry Kellogg	Wilderness and Trails Manager, Santa Barbara Ranger District
---------------	---

CHANGES TO THE AGENDA – None.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Robert Bernstein raised a few issues about dogs on trails. Catherine Mullen, a Veterinarian in Santa Barbara County, expressed her concerns about dogs on trails and playing in pools and creeks. Eric Schwartz also expressed his concerns about dogs on trails and playing in pools and creeks.

TASK FORCE AND STAFF COMMUNICATIONS:

1. Approval of Minutes – For Action

Recommendation: That the FCT Multi-Jurisdictional Task Force approve the meeting of December 2, 2010.

Motion:

Task Force members Longstreet/Emmens to approve the minutes of the regular meeting of December 2, 2010.

Vote:

Unanimous voice vote.

OLD BUSINESS

2. UTAP Trails Assessment Project – For Information

Recommendation: That the Front Country Trails Multi-Jurisdictional Task Force receives a status report on the Trail Survey Project.

Documents:

-Attachment 2

Speakers:

-Staff: Kathy Frye, Natural Areas Planner, City of Santa Barbara.

-Members of the Public: Steven Dougherty.

Task Force Comments:

-Task Force Member Burns expressed his concerns about how long this process is taking. He said the Task Force was looking into using professionals back in July, but then decided on volunteers at the October meeting. A member had said that it would take approximately nine more months with volunteers to complete this work and it does not make sense to take that long. He asked staff if they had any comments.

- o Ms. Frye explained that they weighed the benefits of using HETAP, which is the automated system or UTAP. There was a problem with moving forward with HETAP because the trailware software that allowed manually entered data was not back word compatible with the electronic version. They are using UTAP.

-Task Force Member Burns asked about the cost and if there are enough volunteers.

- o Ms. Frye said there is a core group of people who have been working together that include volunteers and county staff. She can also jump in when needed. She does not expect new volunteers. Ms. Frye did not have the total dollar amount that had been taken to this point.

-Task Force Member Dale asked how long it would take to calculate the trails manually.

- o Ms. Frye said she would have to think about it. It has taken nine days to get two miles. With a core group of people it does go faster. There is also the amount of time that it takes to hike.

-Task Force Member Dale asked if there could be a combination of the automated and manual components.

- o Ms. Frye said that the manual work could be done; it is the software program that is the problem. It is not a matter of imputing the data.

- Task Force Member Dale would be in favor of combining the two for timeline sake.
- Task Force Member Perkins said we have some difficult trails, Cold Springs being one of them, if not the most difficult. She can see that it is an extremely frustrating situation to start out on a learning curve software. One of the things we have to consider is that this is a long range process and it will be well worth it. Also, the important thing is that we need this data.
- Task Force Member Longstreet commented on how the Task Force needs to be mindful of staff time, especially with the budget considerations that each agency is going through. The Task Force needs to be realistic about this process.

3. Trail Maintenance Update – For Information

Recommendation: That the Front Country Trails Multi-Jurisdictional Task Force receives a status report on FCT trail maintenance projects.

Documents:

- Attachment 3
- PowerPoint Presentation

Speakers:

- Staff: Kerry Kellogg, US Forest Service; Erik Axelson, County Parks Deputy Director
- Members of the Public: Chris Orr

Task Force Comments:

- o Mr. Axelson commented on opening the trails threatened by the Jesusita Fire. The key determinant will be the amount of rain and when it happens. The goal is to open the closed trails on April 1st and that will depend on the assessment done the last week in March.
- Task Force Member Perkins asked how effective are we on getting out public service announcements during the rains asking people to stay off the trails.
- o Mr. Axelson said he will be working with the relevant Public Information Officers and various Government agencies.

NEW BUSINESS

4. Front Country Trails Coordinator Update – For Action

Recommendation: That the Front Country Trails Multi-Jurisdictional Task Force receives a status report on the FCT Coordinator Update and concur with staff on key 2010 priorities.

Documents:

- Attachment 4
- PowerPoint Presentation

Speakers:

- Staff: Rebecca Mordini, Front Country Trails Coordinator; Jill Zachary Assistant Parks and Recreation Director
- Members of the Public: Jim Childress, Jim Dougherty.

Task Force Comments:

- Task Force Member Longstreet said the priority is keeping the trails open and maintained. She is glad to see there is a work plan. Also, understands the public's comments and thinks the Task Force came to the conclusion that they needed to work on some other areas before addressing uses. The fires threw us off and the sudden closures of trails. We don't need to reinvent the wheel; we do not need to go back over old information.
- Task Force Member Emmens said he was glad Ms. Mordini took the time to look backwards as well as forwards in terms of what the recommendations of

the Task Force were and how we are moving towards those. There are still some missing recommendations in terms of the matrix the Task Force developed. He sees the effort to get groups and other interested parties out there and funding sources. He does not want to lose track or lose sight of those recommendations the Task Force has made and the importance of keeping those things on a schedule and on track so we are able to bring this thing along systematically. There is a lot to be done and he hopes staff is still with Ms. Mordini. He is in agreement with the work plan for this year.

- Task Force Member Dale understood that the goal of this organization was to assess the trails so that the Task Force can make policies on use. She agrees that if the Task Force has been at it for three or four years then we need to get to it. She understands the funding constraints. The Task Force needs to make informed and intelligent decisions. The Task Force needs to keep its focus on why they're here and trail maintenance is important. She thinks the public is waiting for policies, procedures and recommendations from the Task Force and how we can quickly, efficiently and for not much money access the trails. This seems to be the challenge and hopefully staff and senior members of the Task force have the answer.
- Task Force Member Burns thinks Ms. Mordini is doing a great job considering the Task Force wasn't able to get a lot of staff focus. He sees we are moving forward quickly. Whether or not we work on policies or maintenance first; I think we do need to maintain the trails. We had 15 trail maintenance days on an annual basis and now we are down to four or five, which means we need to get that back. What Ms. Mordini is doing and planning to do with community outreach will be great. Letting people know the Task Force is here is really going to help. Task Force Member Burns is happy with the direction they're taking.
- Task Force Member Bensen thinks the plan is really good. He likes it because one of the things the Task Force intended to do was in the beginning come up with comprehensive management strategy for the front country trails because without that we would become fragmented and lost. One of the main issues that brought everyone together in the beginning was the conflicts and so understands the need to assess the trails. What he would like to see is the policy section moved up a little further and the data collected quicker so that can be visited a little earlier on in the year. He thinks that would be a good thing to do because he thinks the public does want to see the Task Force move ahead with establishing those.
- Task Force Member Perkins doesn't want the Task Force to lose sight of why they started doing this and she also does not want to see the Task Force wait till December before they come forward with some idea for the public. The Task Force has been at the process for quite a while and maintenance and policies are not mutually exclusive. She thinks the Task Force needs to have increment reports back so the community understands they are all moving forward. She thinks there has to be someone one in Santa Barbara that can help with the computer programming or HETAP/UTAP. We have got to get these standards established sooner rather than later because she does not want to see it be the very last thing the Task Force deals with. It is going to be the Task Force's most difficult decision and she is a big believer of not putting off tough decisions to last. She thinks the Task Force will lose a lot of people in the community if things do not move forward. It is not about maintenance, establishing policies and volunteer groups or who is brushing what trail. She thinks the Task Force needs to come up with the standards and move forward with that. It needs to be moved up and that will be determined by whether someone can help coordinate HETAP/UTAP and the computer language. The problem is finding someone to help who will help for no compensation.
 - o Jill Zachary, Assistant Parks and Recreation Director for the City of Santa Barbara responded to some of the Task Force comments. The suggestion that there be more detail regarding trail standards is well taken. The December date is due to it being a Task Force meeting and

it's a significant milestone. We will go back and flush it out and give it back to you at the next meeting and have more information on how to structure that discussion. There is an immediate need as Ms. Mordini mentioned to do some trail work now that the season allows it. We are not losing sight that there is policy work that needs to be done to come back to the Task Force. To Task Force Member Burns she said that the staff is still available, so Ms. Mordini has a whole group of people she is working with.

- Rebecca Mordini, Front Country Trails Coordinator, clarified on how #3 Trail Standards got presented the way it did. These are not in order of priority. They are generally in the same order that they come up in the recommendation, so that is just an organizational way that I am trying to be consistent. Mr. Childress and Task Force Members are correct; we want interim milestones. The lack of them in this report is because she has not studied that part as thoroughly as she's studied the maintenance piece. When she has the opportunity to study the issue, she guarantees the Task Force will see a thorough of a plan with more milestones and steps. We do not plan to wait until December to address this, but that being the last Task Force meeting we will have our final milestones for that.

-Task Force Member Perkins thinks the Task Force just wants to make sure everyone is on the same page. Fans care about this and it is very critical to the community. When you put items at the end of a page, people assume it's the last item that will be discussed.

Motion:

Task Force Members Longstreet/Emmens to accept the 2010 work plan with the modifications the Task Force has recommended.

Vote:

Unanimous voice vote.

ADJOURNMENT

At 6:58 PM, with no further business to come before the Task Force, the meeting was adjourned to the next scheduled meeting, to be held on June 2, 2010, at the Santa Barbara County Administration Building, Planning Commission Hearing Room, 123 E. Anapamu Street, Santa Barbara.

Motion:

Task Force members Longstreet/Emmens to adjourn the meeting.

Vote:

Unanimous voice vote

Respectfully submitted,



Erik Axelsson
County Parks Deputy Director